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CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH  
ON THE SPATIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN  
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE CITY

SCIENTIFIC SUBJECT REVIEW  
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SUVREMENA ISTRAŽIVANJA  
PROSTORNIH ODNOSA JAVNE KNJIŽNICE  
I GRADA

PREGLEDNI ZNANSTVENI ČLANAK  
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FIG. 1 LIBRARY OF SAINT MARK, VENICE, ITALY; CENTRAL LIBRARY OODI, HELSINKI, FINLAND; LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTER, VIENNA, AUSTRIA

SL. 1. KNJIŽNICA SVETOG MARKA, VENECIJA, ITALIJA;  
CENTRALNA KNJIŽNICA OODI, HELSINKI, FINSKA; KNJIŽNICA I  
CENTAR ZA UČENJE, BEČ, AUSTRIJA

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# CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH ON THE SPATIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE CITY

## SUVREMENA ISTRAŽIVANJA PROSTORNIH ODNOSA JAVNE KNJIŽNICE I GRADA

CULTURE-LED URBAN REGENERATION  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
URBAN RESILIENCE  
URBAN TRANSFORMATION  
URBAN UPGRADING

URBANA REGENERACIJA VOĐENA KULTUROM  
JAVNA KNJIŽNICA  
URBANA OTPORNOST  
URBANA TRANSFORMACIJA  
URBANA NADOGRADNJA

Public library has been taking active roles in the urban transformation strategies over the last twenty years. This paper researches origins and defines the public library and the city relation, systematizing those roles and strategies through literature review. The library and the city relation is confirmed as mutual and the public library is defined as the „place” in the city fabric in the accordance with its architectural attributes and location.

Javna knjižnica aktivno sudjeluje u strategijama urbane transformacije tijekom posljednjih dvadeset godina. Ovaj rad istražuje podrijetlo i definira odnose javne knjižnice i grada, te sistemizira uloge i strategije kroz pregled literature. Odnos knjižnice i grada sagledava se kao uzajaman, a javna knjižnica definira 'mjestom' u gradskom tkivu u skladu sa svojim arhitektonskim atributima i položajem.



## INTRODUCTION

### UVOD

The relation between the library and the city is a complex, multi-layered and reciprocal one.<sup>1</sup> The first libraries appeared in the first human settlements, evolved and changed along with the city.<sup>2</sup> Modern public libraries, just as the cities themselves, are influenced by numerous factors: constant social, demographic and environmental changes, persistent transformation undergoing the process of information storage, learning and reading, and ongoing technology development. With its function as cultural, educational, informational institution and its main attribute of “being public”, public library embodies social patterns, while on the other side it represents political will through its space and architecture, functions and programme. These are key elements in creating relations between the public library and urban fabric, placing it in relation to other public spaces of the city. As such, public libraries are used as tools to support urban redevelopment and transformation strategies.

Public library projects are legitimized<sup>3</sup> through urban planning agendas of “branding the city”<sup>4</sup> and redefining the identity of the city<sup>5</sup> on a wider international scene, reinforcing social connections, fostering culture and education in the local community. High profile, downtown libraries are the most prominent ones among diverse examples of contemporary public libraries, highlighting their symbolic and architectural values.

This paper studies the relation between the public library and the city through a literature review, pointing to the roles of the public library in urban transformation strategies, and diversity of public libraries appearing in different locations in the city.

Highlighting all aspects of this complex subject needs an interdisciplinary approach; hence the research is based on literature from the fields of urban planning and architecture, library and information science, and other social sciences, especially urban sociology. The most relevant references are from the field of urbanism and library science researching different roles of public library in urban transformation strategies, supported by literature from the field of architecture that deals with public library as the main topic and, indirectly, the library/city relation as one of the factors of influence.

Although there is a wealth of literature relevant to perceiving the role of the public library in the city, there is no comprehensive approach to this subject. Most of the researches are concentrated on one problem, each elaborating one specific approach, strategy or role. The aim of this paper is to present and systematise available literature on this subject in order to highlight the importance and potentials of the roles of the public library in urban transformation.

From the architecture and urbanism point of view, this paper presents the public library / city relation through: 1. A brief historical overview of the library / city relation, finding the origins of the roles that public libraries have in the contemporary urban strategies; 2. Analysis and systematisation of urban strategies and roles of public libraries in the cities, finding distinctions and intersections between different theoretical approaches; 3. Position, location and attributes of public libraries in cities and urban fabric, considering these roles.

The references are selected according to criteria based on the research topic and period

- 1 DUDLEY, 2013: Preface
- 2 POSNER, 2002
- 3 EVJEN, 2015
- 4 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013
- 5 MATTERN 2003, 2007
- 6 POSNER, 2002: 4
- 7 HARRIS, 1975, 1999; BLACK, PEPPER, 2012; MATTERN, 2007; KOONTZ, 1997
- 8 The Great Library of Alexandria was established in 3. Ct BC
- 9 PHILLIPS, 2010: 4
- 10 CASSON, 2002; PHILLIPS, 2010
- 11 ERSKINE, 1995: 38
- 12 CASSON, 2002; MATTERN, 2014
- 13 GAMESON, 2006

of time. These criteria include the literature dealing with:

- the role of the public library in the city,
- the role of the public libraries in urban transformation strategies,
- indirect research on public library / city relation, with the main topic of library architecture,
- indirect research on public library / city relation, where the main topic of the research is the position of the library in the community, or the specific social aspect of the connection between the library and the community,
- sources from the beginning of the new millennia, considered as contemporary research on the library/city relation.

The first part of this paper is a comprehensive literature review on origins of the library/city relation and traditional roles of the public library in the city. Hence, the literature from the field of the history of libraries, without criteria determining the date of the source, has been included and analysed according to the described criteria. Contemporary literature review gives comparative analysis of the theoretical approach to the roles of public libraries in urban transformation strategies, main attributes of library space and function and library position and location in the city fabric.

## PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE CITY

### – ORIGINS, NATURE AND INFLUENCES

#### JAVNA KNJIŽNICA I GRAD

#### – PODRIJETLO, PRIRODA I UTJECAJI

Ever since the emergence of the first cities, libraries, as repositories of information, culture and knowledge, have been deeply interwoven within the urban fabric. “As cities grew, their libraries helped to promote all their varied activities, as well as their economic and cultural development.”<sup>14</sup> This chapter presents research on origins of the library/city relation, conducted through a literature review. The research is presented chronologically in order to understand the development of the rela-

tion, highlighting the role, location, functional and physical attributes of the libraries in the cities, and the turning points, according to factors that had influenced those changes. Findings of this chapter are used as a base for further literature review.

Although the researchers in Europe and the USA state that history of public libraries began in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>7</sup>, the roles of libraries in cities have been recognised since the old world. According to Phillips (2010), the Great library of Alexandria<sup>8</sup> had an important role in building identity of the new metropolis of Alexandria. It was a tool for presenting the city as an “intellectual and cultural center”<sup>9</sup> on a global level, overcoming multiculturalism and social diversity in the city, and for presenting the power of the ruler at the same time.<sup>10</sup> The library was a part of a larger institution called “Mouseion” that was located in the city core with other strategically important buildings and public realms.<sup>11</sup> It was a repository of all knowledge of the ancient world, a prototypical “think tank”, which included libraries, workshops, dining spaces and dormitories.<sup>12</sup>

Medieval period is not the subject of interest, since the library became a part, or just a shelf, in other, mainly religious buildings, and was far away from the public use,<sup>13</sup> while the role of the renaissance libraries in the city was highlighted through shaping the main public spaces, outlining them with “iconic” architecture. The Library of Saint Mark, Venice, “proudly exhibits one of the most sumptuous facades of the Renaissance and defines one of the most prominent public spaces in Italy”<sup>14</sup>, San Marco Square.

The forerunners of today’s public libraries appeared in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe and America, along with industrialisation, social and demographic changes and development of civic society.<sup>15</sup> The public library was promoted as the “cultural powerhouse of a town”.<sup>16</sup> It reflected local economic progress while contributing to it at the same time. Their main role in strengthening of the civic identity<sup>17</sup>, presented them as important components in the competitive struggle with other “towns for supremacy in urban social progress”.<sup>18</sup> For the first time the social aspect of the library role become an important component of the library/city relation. The architecture of the pioneer public libraries retained traditional attributes of being “monumental”, “palatial”<sup>19</sup>, while their function was upgraded with additional socialising and entertaining areas.<sup>20</sup> Early public library made a shift in library location preferences from “large urban centers”<sup>21</sup> to small towns, new central business districts or elite neighbourhood.<sup>22</sup> It was still positioned at a single prestigious location in the city, serving the entire community.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>14</sup> CONNORS, 2010: 12

<sup>15</sup> HARRIS, 1975, 1999; BLACK, PEPPER, 2012; MATTERN, 2007; KOONTZ, 1997; MEHTONEN, 2016

<sup>16</sup> BLACK, PEPPER, 2012: 446

<sup>17</sup> Strengthening of the civic identity is achieved through public library role in promoting morality, educate, emancipate and include work-class in developing cities. [BLACK, PEPPER, 2012; MATTERN, 2007]

<sup>18</sup> BLACK, PEPPER, 2012: 446

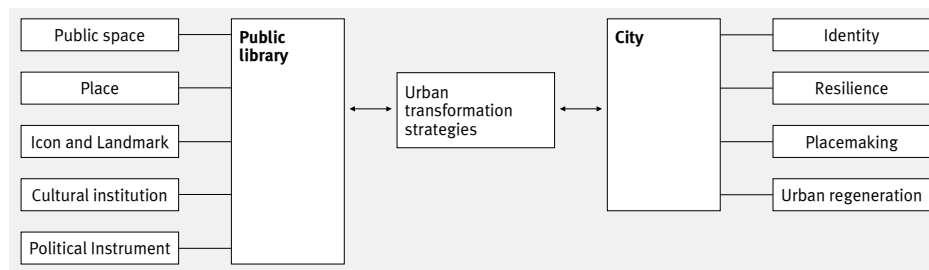
<sup>19</sup> BLACK, PEPPER, 2012; MEHTONEN, 2016

<sup>20</sup> Carnegie libraries, from the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, had pools, public baths, gym, and promoted leisure reading besides educational. [DUDLEY, 2013; MATTERN, 2007]

<sup>21</sup> CASSON, 2002

<sup>22</sup> KOONTZ, 1997: 11

<sup>23</sup> KOONTZ, 1997: 11



GRAPH. I PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE CITY  
GRAFI. I. JAVNA KNJIŽNICA I GRAD

During the period between two world wars, the major role of the public library was promoting democracy, and open access to “the whole spectrum of human knowledge”.<sup>24</sup> This idea was embodied both in the library architecture and the library location in the city. The simplicity of the library design with an emphasis on large and open interior spaces providing free access to books<sup>25</sup>, and development of branch libraries, still unevenly distributed, with the aim to bring books and information within walking distance<sup>26</sup>, were the main attributes of public libraries.

Expansion in planning and building public libraries in the cities, organizing them as central libraries with their branches, began in the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The roles of the public library in the city relayed on its social, educational and informational function, with intention of “modernization of the nation”<sup>27</sup>, and beyond, to take a part in redevelopment of the cities.<sup>28</sup> Development of the new media and transport system, along with exploring and analysing location and design criteria, made it possible to plan a network of public library system, while “modernist designs for libraries became the norm”.<sup>29</sup> Library architecture abandoned the “institutional look”<sup>30</sup>, “allowing internal spaces to achieve a sense of spaciousness more characteristic of spaces beyond a building’s walls”.<sup>31</sup> Network of public libraries was planned and realised according to the equitable distribution of library services in the city, consisting of the central library and evenly distributed branches.

The roles of public libraries in cities evolved, expanded and upgraded over different historical periods. This literature review indicates that traditional roles of the public library in the city are: role in building and presenting the identity of the city; role in supporting urban social progress; and role in supporting redevelopment of towns and cities. These roles represent a starting point for the research on the relation between the contemporary city and the library.

The rise of the social, informational and educational aspect of the public library influenced the shift in its position and location. Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the model of a single library at the ‘prestigious

location’ in the city, serving all the community or beyond, has changed into a network of public libraries with central one and its branches. According to numerous influential factors, along with the role and location, its functional and spatial attributes evolved and changed from closed monumental forms to the structures with the premise of openness, and from an elite-serving institution to a democratic institution with a wide range of socialising and entertaining areas.

## ROLES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN URBAN TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES

### ULOGE JAVNIH KNJIŽNICA U STRATEGIJAMA URBANIH TRANSFORMACIJA

Relying on their traditional roles, their complex relation with cities, and a new approach to urban planning in the postmodern era, public libraries are considered as tools for contemporary strategies of urban transformation, regeneration and revitalisation. In the contemporary literature, their role is basically connected with their characteristics of “being public”, cultural institutions<sup>32</sup>, political instruments<sup>33</sup>, and “iconic architecture” (Graph. I). These characteristics are often intertwined, but also confronted.<sup>34</sup>

This chapter analyses contemporary literature in order to present and systematize different urban transformation strategies in which public libraries have taken an active part, analysing basic roles of public libraries in those strategies. Main attributes, position and location of the public library in the city, its roles and strategies, will be analysed and discussed through different literature sources.

<sup>24</sup> HARRIS, 1975: 18

<sup>25</sup> GIL-SOLÉS, 2018

<sup>26</sup> KOONTZ, 1997: 13

<sup>27</sup> BLACK, PEPPER, 2012: 455

<sup>28</sup> Black and Pepper, 2012, claim that one of the roles of public libraries in modernism era was to “promote better-quality design in the redevelopment of Britain’s town and cities”. [BLACK, PEPPER, 2012: 455]

<sup>29</sup> BLACK, PEPPER, 2012: 456

<sup>30</sup> BLACK, PEPPER, 2012: 457

<sup>31</sup> BLACK, PEPPER, 2012: 457

<sup>32</sup> SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013

<sup>33</sup> CAPILLE, 2017; EVJEN, 2015

<sup>34</sup> MATTERN, 2003, 2007

<sup>35</sup> SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 8

<sup>36</sup> VICKERY, 2007: 19

<sup>37</sup> SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 8

<sup>38</sup> SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 1

<sup>39</sup> SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 9

<sup>40</sup> \*\*\* 1994

<sup>41</sup> EVJEN, 2015

<sup>42</sup> SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013; MATTERN, 2007; WORPOLE, 2013

es. Those characteristics will be discussed through main case studies derived from the literature in order to discuss the location and attributes of the public library in comparison to their roles in urban strategies.

• **Culture-led urban regeneration** – A comprehensive study, “The role of public libraries in culture-led urban regeneration” by Skot-Hansen, Hvenegaard Rasmussen, Jochumsen, 2013, investigates the potentials of public library as a cultural institution in the centre of culture-led urban regeneration. The main goal of this policy concept for urban development<sup>35</sup> is to improve the quality of life – “doing so by integrating the aesthetic and economic”<sup>36</sup>, helping in “re-branding and refurbishing”<sup>37</sup> the city in the era of globalization, by positioning the culture in the centre of regeneration. As cultural institutions, public libraries have “actively contributed to urban development by changing the image and identity of urban places, contributing to urban diversity and addressing social and economic problems.”<sup>38</sup> The same paper gives a framework for researching basic roles of the public library in the city. These roles are: “(1) cultural icons and landmarks; (2) placemaking and urban identity; and (3) community consolidation.”<sup>39</sup> Through these roles, the cultural, educational, informational<sup>40</sup> and social aspects<sup>41</sup> of the public library in the city are considered as its fundamental and traditional roles.

The role of the public library as a cultural icon and landmark is studied and discussed under the term of the ‘iconic architecture’<sup>42</sup>. Perceived in this way, iconic libraries have often been criticised. They were “seen as part of urban boosterism and branding”<sup>43</sup>, too commercialized, decontextualized, leading to

gentrification<sup>44</sup>, which are all attributes that are not in accordance with the basic and most inherent characteristic of the public library – “being public”.<sup>45</sup> Architectural prominence of those libraries has to be one of the most important attributes, they have to be “unique” and “instantly recognizable”<sup>46</sup> both globally and locally, embodying the idea of library as a public space. The most common attributes are openness, permeability<sup>47</sup>, fluid and flexible space and the disappearance of the façade.<sup>48</sup>

Seattle Public Library<sup>49</sup> is the most commonly discussed public library in the contemporary literature, approved or criticised, for its iconic characteristics and architectural values. „Seattle Public Library is the building perceived independently of the institution which uses it”<sup>50</sup>, representing the metaphor for contemporary library architecture, in the way of reinventing the library as an architectural type, or questioning if there is a need for the library to be of a specific architectural type, or should every library building be rather “unpredictable”<sup>51</sup> and a result of individual approach and research.

The role of an icon or landmark has its origins in the traditional role of a building presenting the identity of the city. Attributes of significant and recognisable architecture and a symbolic landmark, a link with its traditional role, can present an “icon” with a positive connotation. The location criteria for the contemporary “iconic libraries” are different from the traditional ones. They refer not only to the city centre, but the suburban and brownfield sites, as well.

The role of the public library in placemaking is the most represented and inherent role of the public library in its relation to the city, and is analysed as part of all urban strategies in the reviewed literature. Placemaking is an urban strategy connected to “new urbanism”, model of urban planning which emerged in early '90 as a response to the international style, as well as uncontrolled urban sprawl that led to non-places and losing identity.<sup>52</sup> The “desired result of placemaking” is to create “sense of place” which is “a human need, essential for wellbeing and feelings of safety, security and orientation, and a remedy against feelings of alienation and estrangement.”<sup>53</sup>

The public library, with its activities and functions, and as a public space<sup>54</sup> can be a strong place activator.<sup>55</sup> Hence, the public library is defined as “third place”<sup>56</sup>, “meeting place”, “living room” of the city<sup>57</sup>, a “key destination in which countless social interactions occur”.<sup>58</sup> All these social attributes in placemaking are supported by “high design standards in library architecture and landscaping” where “library parks, plazas, and

43 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 10

44 MATTERN, 2003, 2007

45 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013; MATTERN, 2003; MICKIEWICZ, 2016; BERNDTSON, 2013

46 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 11

47 EVJEN, 2015; SMITH, 2015

48 GIL-SOLÉS, 2018

49 Rem Koolhaas and OMA, 2004

50 KRUSZEWSKI, 2012: 79

51 BLACK, PEPPER, 2012

52 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013; DUDLEY, 2013; ELLIN, 2013

53 ARAVOT, 2002: 202

54 As Berndtson explains “libraries become more living places than earlier” and they have a great potential, as a public spaces, and a role in urban development through placemaking. [BERNDTSON, 2013: 5-6]

55 ELLIN, 2013

56 Ray Oldenberg's (1989), theory establishes the “third place” as social surrounding, apart from home (“first place”), and work (“second place”), as places for social interactions, important for democracy, interactions and gathering the people.

57 BERNDTSON, 2013; DUDLEY, 2013; WORPOLE, 2004

58 DUDLEY, 2013: 13



TABLE I PUBLIC LIBRARY AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES

TABL. I. JAVNA KNJIŽNICA I STRATEGIJE URBANIH TRANSFORMACIJA

Author, year, title	field	role	strategy
SKOT-HANSEN, D.; HVENEGAARD RASMUSSEN, C.; JOCHUMSEN, H. (2013), <i>The role of public libraries in culture-led urban regeneration</i>	Library science	– as Icon or landmark, libraries as part of urban branding – in placemaking – in community vitalisation	culture-led urban regeneration
BERNDTSON, M. (2013), <i>Public libraries and placemaking</i>	Library science	– in placemaking	–
CAPILLÉ, C. (2018), <i>Political theatres in the urban periphery: Medellín and the Library-Parks Project</i>	Architecture and urbanism	– transform areas that were hitherto peripheral in this city's economy, culture and politics	urban upgrading
GOODSHIP, P.; CAPILLE, C. (2017), <i>A comprehensive approach to urban upgrading: The role of space and architecture in Medellín's 'Urban Integral Projects'</i>	Architecture and urbanism	– icon, landmark – social change	urban upgrading
DUDLEY, M. [ed.] (2013), <i>Public Libraries and Resilient Cities</i>	Urbanism, Library science	– community building – developing community resilience – placemaking	increasing urban resilience
GRACE, D.; SEN, B.A. (2013), <i>Community Resilience and the Role of the Public Library</i>	Library science	– developing community resilience	Increasing urban resilience

meeting rooms afford members of the public valuable public spaces”.<sup>59</sup>

The role in placemaking is applicable on all strategies related to the location and position of the library in cities from downtown revitalisation and branding the city, brownfield location revitalization to informal suburbs regeneration. This role refers to contemporary urban strategies, but has base in establishing the identity of the place, or “genius loci”, referring to traditional urbanism values.

The role of the public library in community vitalisation<sup>60</sup> is based on: “boosting local identity and cohesion; addressing social and economic challenges; and initiating local innovation, creativity and co-operation.”<sup>61</sup> Along with placemaking, this role is widely represented in all the reviewed sources, whereas public libraries were seen as ‘community hubs’, ‘makerspaces’ and ‘co-located community centres’.<sup>62</sup> This role is orientated to library function, and offer of different, even, untraditional spaces, such as: low-intensity meeting spaces, different kinds of workshops, flexible multipurpose spaces. Far from high-standard design and architectural significance, the libraries researched as case studies that support this role are un-traditional, on untypical locations – from a traditional library building to a refurbished former industrial depot, “easily accessible spaces which are modeled on commercial retail environments”, micro, pop-up and ad-hoc libraries, which are distributed and imprinted into the community, and can be planned on all possible locations in the urban fabric. This role, most of all, highlighted the current need for re-branding, re-inventing<sup>63</sup> the library and its relation to the city, but it is rooted in its traditional role in supporting urban social progress, and relaying on social, educational and informational function.

• **Urban upgrading** – The role of the Public Library in Urban upgrading strategy is primarily connected to Medellín, Colombia, model of urban transformation. This strategy aims at the improvement of the existing poor urban settlements, “provision of infrastructures, buildings and programs that could improve, rather than eradicate, urban informality”.<sup>64</sup> Public library, which is central to this strategy, was redefined into a new model – a library park, with the new concept of public spaces, where closed public spaces are merged with open public spaces which surround library, addressing “the need for more cultural and education space in poor neighborhoods”.<sup>65</sup> They offer wide range of activities, according to their cultural, educational and social functions<sup>66</sup> and, “are architecturally designed to a high standard”.<sup>67</sup> Medellín Library parks, analysed as key studies, are – icons, landmarks, meeting places, placemakers, community vitalizers, and urban infrastructure. They are “improving local identity”<sup>68</sup> and “in generating a larger bonding and sense of belonging [from people] to the place”.<sup>69</sup> They are located in urban periphery, within the most unprivileged communities, and form a network with other public spaces in the city through transport systems, constructed as a part of the urban transformation strategy.

• **Increasing urban resilience** – In the context of the relation between the public library and the city, Dudley (2013) defines urban resilience as the “ability of cities, towns, or neighborhoods to respond effectively to changing circumstances and challenges by virtue of their flexibility, diversity, and built-in redundancies”.<sup>70</sup> Since resilience is the term often connected to the ability to face natural or man-made disaster, this research also sees the opportunity in public libraries to help community to respond to everyday issues that make cities unlivable as well.<sup>71</sup>

Public library is a tool in cities for developing resilience, “as an institution, a place, a function, an idea”<sup>72</sup>, reinforcing interconnections within the urban fabric, supporting its adaptability, increasing community resilience<sup>73</sup>, fostering community’s learning capacity and ability of citizens to access information, services, education.<sup>74</sup> In developing urban resilience, public realm is of crucial significance, while, “At a basic level the public library is a fundamental component of the public realm”<sup>75</sup> in cities. Consequently, the role in placemaking is of particular interest, along with community vitalization, and building the identity<sup>76</sup>, while the high library design is notable, but not crucial. Other important roles of the public library in increasing urban resilience are in promoting urban sustainability

59 DUDLEY, 2013: 13

60 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 9

61 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013: 13

62 MATTERN, 2014; LEORKE et al., 2018

63 SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013; MATTERN, 2007

64 CAPILLÉ, 2018: 128

65 GOODSHIP, CAPILLE, 2017: 63.2

66 GRANDA, MACHIN-MASTROMATTEO, 2018: 203

67 GOODSHIP, CAPILLE, 2017: 63.2

68 CAPILLÉ, 2018; GRANDA, MACHIN-MASTROMATTEO, 2018

69 GRANDA, MACHIN-MASTROMATTEO, 2018: 202

70 DUDLEY, 2013: 2



TABLE II PUBLIC LIBRARY ROLES AND LOCATIONS

TABL. II. ULOGE I LOKACIJE JAVNIH KNJIŽNICA

Urban transformation strategy	Role			Location			
	Icon and landmark	Placemaking	Community vitalization	Downtown	Urban periphery	Brownfield location	Urban developing area
Culture-led urban regeneration	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Urban upgrading	+	+	+	–	+	–	–
Increasing urban resilience	+ –	+	+	+	+	+	+

and supporting digitalization and media shift, as well.

According to contemporary literature review (Table I), public library is a powerful tool in urban transformation strategies including: 1. Culture-led urban regeneration; 2. Urban upgrading; 3. Increasing urban resilience. The roles of public libraries, systematised in the strategy of culture-led urban regeneration<sup>77</sup>, as cultural icon and landmark; in placemaking and in community vitalization, are presented in all strategies. While culture-led urban regeneration and increasing urban resilience are seen as universal urban transformation strategies, urban upgrading in relation to public library is connected to Medellín urban transformation model. Furthermore, the diverse public library roles are visible in their positions and locations in the city (Table II). Ten library parks are built in Medellín, Colombia urban peripheries as an important part of urban transformation strategy; transforming urban fabric on each location, city is transformed from the most violent to most creative city.<sup>78</sup> Seattle, USA, Birmingham, UK, and Helsinki, Finland, authorities built high profile libraries as a part of downtown regeneration, while their predecessors were demolished under the same urban transformation agendas. The library in Aarhus, Denmark, and Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam, Netherlands are new central city libraries built as a cornerstone in brownfield regeneration strategy, or as an area developing generator.

## CONCLUSION

### ZAKLJUČAK

The complexity of the public library / city relation can be defined through the roles of the public library in different urban strategies. As such, relaying on its basic functions and architecture, the public library is a powerful tool in transforming cities and towns. Contemporary roles of public libraries in the cities include the traditional ones: building and presenting the identity of the city; supporting urban social progress; and supporting redevelopment of towns and cities; they are not obsolete or exceeded, but upgraded and extended, along with library functions. Since the library is “reinvented”<sup>79</sup> as architectural

type and function, its roles in the city are reinvented as well.

Contemporary literature recognises the following public library roles: as cultural icon and landmark; in placemaking and in community vitalisation. These roles found their place in urban transformation strategies including: 1. Culture-led urban regeneration; 2. Urban upgrading; 3. Increasing urban resilience. The role in placemaking is found as most inherent for all strategies and for majority of case-studies.

Until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, libraries were positioned on single prestigious locations in cities, according to their symbolic and cultural values. These location criteria remained, although roles have been changed and upgraded, with the developing of social, informational and educational functions. The development of civic society and democracy led to the establishment of library networks, which were composed of central and branches. The location criteria were orientated to achieve even distribution of library services into community and urban fabric. Until the new millennia, it was possible to chronologically analyse the location criteria and the role of the public library in the city. Contemporary locations and roles of the public library in the city are multifaceted, and depend on context and urban transformation strategies. Location can vary from traditional downtown, urban periphery, brownfield location or city developing area. Furthermore the urban agenda can determine one, or a customized system of public library locations. Along with the role and location of the public library, its functional and spatial attributes evolved and changed, from distanced “temple of knowledge”<sup>80</sup> to the structures with the premise of openness, and from an elite serving institution to a community hub with wide range of socialising and entertaining areas.

This paper aims to highlight possibilities of public libraries to become a part of new urban transformation agendas, which could be based on public library systems in cities, overlapping their virtual and environmental role<sup>81</sup> with the traditional one in the direction of the “city as the library concept”.<sup>82</sup>

[Written in English by the authors, proof-read by GORDANA KUBURA]

<sup>71</sup> Those issues are “Rapid urbanization, escalating poverty, depleting energy resources, climate change, and ever-worsening gridlock”. [DUDLEY, 2013: 2]

<sup>72</sup> DUDLEY, 2013: Preface

<sup>73</sup> GRACE, SEN, 2013

<sup>74</sup> DUDLEY, 2013: 2

<sup>75</sup> DUDLEY, 2013: 14

<sup>76</sup> DUDLEY, 2013: 13

<sup>77</sup> SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013

<sup>78</sup> GRANDA, MACHIN-MASTROMATTEO, 2018

<sup>79</sup> MATTERN, 2007; ; SKOT-HANSEN et al., 2013

<sup>80</sup> GIL-SOLÉS, 2018

<sup>81</sup> DUDLEY, 2013

<sup>82</sup> BRAWNE, 1997: 18

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## SOURCE

## IZVOR

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## SUMMARY

## SAŽETAK

## SUVREMENA ISTRAŽIVANJA PROSTORNIH ODNOSA JAVNE KNJIŽNICE I GRADA

Odnos javnih knjižnica i grada kompleksan je, višeslojan te star koliko i grad. Javne knjižnice i grad pod utjecajem su istih čimbenika: socio-demo-grafskih, politicko-ekonomskih, prostornih, okolišnih i tehnoloških, koji potiču njihovu konstantnu transformaciju. S obzirom na svoj javni karakter, kulturnu, obrazovnu i informacijsku funkciju te svoje arhitektonske atribute, suvremene knjižnice postaju bitan element u strategijama urbanih transformacija.

Ovaj članak donosi pregled literature na temu suvremenog odnosa javnih knjižnica i gradova. Iako se mnogo relevantnih istraživanja bavi ulogom javnih knjižnica u gradu, ne postoji sveobuhvatan pristup tih temi. Većina istraživanja obrađuje po jedan problem, pristup, strategiju ili ulogu. Cilj je ovoga članka sustavno predstaviti dostupnu literaturu o toj temi kako bi se ukazalo na važnost i potencijal uloga javnih knjižnica u urbanoj transformaciji. Članak se temelji na interdisciplinarnom pristupu, a uključuje literaturu iz područja arhitekture i urbanizma, knjižničarstva te urbane sociologije, koja neposredno ili posredno istražuje taj odnos. Odnos grada i knjižnice promatra se kroz kratku povijest knjižnica u gradovima, analizu i sistematizaciju strategija urbanih transformacija i uloga koje javna knjižnica ima u gradovima, poziciju i lokacije javnih knjižnica u gradovima. Suvremene uloge javnih knjižnica u gradovima oslanjaju se na one tradicionalne - ulogu u izgradnji i predstavljanju identiteta grada, ulogu u potpori razvoja urbanog društva i ulogu u podršci razvoju gradova. Te uloge nisu zastarjele i prevladane, već se nadograđuju i proširuju, zajedno s funkcijama knjižnica. Anticka knjižnica u Aleksandriji iz 3. st. pr. Kr. imala je snažnu ulogu u izgradnji identiteta novoformiranog grada i promicanju na globalnoj razini. U doba renesanse, knjižnica Svetog Marka u Veneciji dobiva ulogu u formiranju identiteta otvorenog javnog prostora, jednoga od najznačajnijih trgova renesansne Italije - Trga Svetoga Marka, uokvirujući ga svojim 'ikoničkim' pročeljem.

Usporedno s razvojem građanskog društva u drugoj polovici 19. stoljeća u zapadnoj Europi formiraju se javne knjižnice s osnovnim ulogama u jačanju građanskog identiteta i u potpori razvoja urbanog društva. Uspostava mreže knjižnica u gradovima počinje između dvaju svjetskih ratova, do kada vlada pravilo da se u gradovima gradi jedna knjižnica na reprezentativnoj lokaciji. U istom razdoblju osnovna uloga knjižnica postaje promicanje demokracije i slobodnog pristupa znanju te je, shodno tome, dizajn knjižnica jednostavniji i otvoreniji. Do prave ekspanzije u izgradnji i planiranju javnih knjižnica dolazi polovicom 20. stoljeća, kada se počinju i sveobuhvatnije planirati mreže javnih knjižnica koje su se sastojale od centralne i ravnomjerno raspoređenih ograna. Uloga knjižnica u modernizaciji društva i u poticanju razvoja gradova relevantna je za njihov odnos s gradom.

Prema suvremenoj literaturi javna je knjižnica moćan alat u strategijama urbane transformacije: 1. urbane regeneracije vođene kulturom; 2. urbane nadogradnje; 3. povećanje urbane otpornosti. Uloge javnih knjižnica, usustavljene u sklopu strategija urbane regeneracije vođene kulturom, jesu sljedeće: kulturne ikone, urbani reperi, dionici u *placemakingu* i u vitalizaciji zajednice. Glavni cilj strategije urbane regeneracije vođene kulturom jest povećanje kvalitete života u gradovima postavljanjem kulture u središte urbane transformacije. Javna knjižnica, kao institucija u kulturi, smatra se kvalitetnim alatom u takvoj strategiji. Uloga javnih knjižnica kao ikona i urbanih repera povezuje se s 'ikoničkom arhitekturom'. U tom kontekstu, knjižnice su predmet kritike u suvremenoj literaturi zbog svoje komercijalnosti, dekontekstualnosti i uloge u gentrifikaciji, što je u suprotnosti s njenim osnovnim određenjem - bivanjem javnim prostorom. Uloga u *placemakingu*, koja se smatra inherentnom javnim knjižnicama, najčešća je tema u suvremenoj literaturi i prisutna je u svim strategijama urbane transformacije. Javna knjižnica svojom ulogom u vitalizaciji zajednice pridonosi društve-

noj koheziji, poboljšanju obrazovnih, ekonomskih i socioloških prilika. Ta uloga najviše utječe na rekonceptualizaciju knjižnica u smislu arhitektonskog tipa, otvara potrebu za novim društvenim, kreativnim i tradicionalno atipičnim prostorima i lokacijama.

Knjižnični parkovi novi su modeli javnih knjižnica koji se koriste u strategijama urbane nadogradnje u sklopu Medelin modela urbane transformacije. Dizajnirani su tako da integriraju zatvoreni prostor knjižnice, pripadajuće parkove i otvorene prostore u jedinstveni javni prostor. U sklopu projekta urbane transformacije uspostavljena je mreža knjižnica na najkritičnijim i najproblematičnijim lokacijama urbane periferije Medelina u Kolumbiji.

Javna knjižnica, kao institucija i kao javni prostor, alat je u strategiji razvoja otpornosti gradova jačajući povezanost unutar urbanog tkiva i povećavajući njegovu prilagodljivost. Uloga u razvoju otpornosti nije samo u povećanju sposobnosti grada da odgovori na eventualne prirodne ili izazvane katastrofe već i da se smanji utjecaj svakodnevnih problema koji gradove čine neugodnima za život. Složenost odnosa javne knjižnice i gradova definira se kroz uloge u različitim urbanim strategijama. Oslanjajući se na svoje osnovne funkcije i arhitekturu, javna knjižnica moćan je alat za transformiranje gradova. Lokacija i uloge javnih knjižnica u gradovima višeznačne su i ovise o kontekstu i strategijama urbane transformacije. U skladu s različitim urbanim projektima, lokacija knjižnice može biti tradicionalno u gradskoj jezgri, u suburbanim zonama, *brownfield* lokacijama te kao aktivator lokacija prema kojima se grad širi. Također, u sklopu strategija urbane transformacije može se graditi jedna knjižnica ili gradu prilagođeni sustav javnih knjižnica.

Cilj je ovoga rada istaknuti mogućnosti daljnega istraživanja razvoja odnosa javnih knjižnica i gradova koji bi se mogli temeljiti na sustavima javnih knjižnica i nadogradnji njihovih virtualnih i ekoloških uloga na one tradicionalne i suvremene.

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